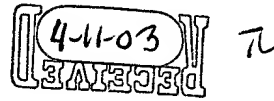


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- 1 1. (Twice Amended) A system for use in gathering information for use in managing a
2 network, said system comprising:
3 a plurality of network switches logically organized in a stack configuration so as to
4 operate as a single logical switch;
5 an entity remote from the plurality of switches for gathering said information;
6 a multiplexer separate from the plurality of network switches for selectively con-
7 necting, according to an arbitration scheme, said plurality of network switches one at a time
8 to said single-remote entity, wherein
9 each switch is connected to said multiplexer by a separate connection, and transmits
10 raw data signals that are converted by the remote entity into network management informa-
11 tion.
- 1 2. A system according to claim 1, wherein said entity comprises a remote monitoring
2 probe.
- 1 3. A system according to claim 1, wherein said multiplexer comprises a network hub.
- 1 4. A system according to claim 1, wherein said multiplexer comprises a network media
2 access unit.

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1 5. A system according to claim 1, wherein said switches are configured to generate con-
2 trol signals for implementing said arbitration scheme.

1 6. A system according to claim 5, wherein said multiplexer is configured to be con-
2 trolled by said control signals.

1 7. A system according to claim 1, wherein said raw data signals comprise switch port
2 activity information, and said switches are configured to permit user selection of particular
3 switch port activity information to be supplied to the remote entity via the multiplexer.

1 8. A system according to claim 1, further comprising program processes executed by
2 said switches for carrying out said arbitration scheme.

1 9. A system for use in gathering network management information, said system com-
2 prising:

3 a plurality of network switches configured in a stacked configuration, each switch
4 having a plurality of ports including a probe port for receiving switch activity-related infor-
5 mation from other ports of the respective switch,

6 a connection between the probe port of a first network switch to a remote monitoring
7 probe;

8 means for interconnecting the network switches through their probe ports; and

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9 means for selectively transmitting the switch activity-related information received at
10 the probe ports in the form of raw data signals to the remote monitoring probe one network
11 switch at a time through the probe port of the first network switch.

1 10. A system according to claim 9, wherein said switches are configured to implement an
2 arbitration scheme for determining the order in which the activity-related information of each
3 switch is provided to said probe.

1 11. A system according to claim 9, wherein said probe ports being solely for transmission
2 of said activity-related information.